

Claims

1. A networked computer broadcasting system with provision for broadcasting multiple broadcasts, where advertising opportunities arising out of such broadcasts are to be sold, where at least some of the broadcasts are organized into one or more series of related broadcasts that are broadcast at weekly or other relatively periodic intervals, and where at least some of the series of broadcasts are further organized into one or more groups of related series of broadcasts, said system comprising:

a broadcasting system that receives multiple broadcasts and transmits them over the network to computers containing tuner software systems with provision enabling their users to receive at least one of the broadcasts:

an advertisement or other message insertion system that can replace or supplement portions of any of the broadcasts with advertisements or other messages, thereby creating advertising opportunities;

a traffic system that automates the selling of the advertising opportunities associated with the broadcasts to advertisers and that permits the advertising opportunities to be collected into packages for sale, the traffic system forming packages in several different ways which may be used in combination with each other, including

selecting advertising opportunities arising in one or more series, and

selecting advertising opportunities arising in one or more groups; and

a coordination system which controls the ordering of advertisement or other message insertion by the insertion system and which itself is controlled by broadcast logs generated by the traffic system.

2. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 1 which further comprises

specifying the number of advertising opportunities of a particular type that are to be included in a package.

3. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 2 which further comprises

selecting advertising opportunities assigned differing prices in accordance with their time of appearance within a broadcast relative to the time of appearance of other events within the broadcast that may affect the attractiveness of that portion of the broadcast to the users of tuners.

4. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 3 which further comprises

selecting advertising opportunities falling within specified time ranges within a day and/or date ranges within the broadcast season.

5. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 2 which further comprises

selecting advertising opportunities falling within specified time ranges within a day and/or date ranges within the broadcast season.

6. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 1 which further comprises

selecting advertising opportunities assigned differing prices in accordance with their time of appearance within a broadcast relative to the time of appearance of other events within the broadcast that may affect the attractiveness of that portion of the broadcast to the users of tuners.

7. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 6 which further comprises

selecting advertising opportunities falling within specified time ranges within a day and/or date ranges within the broadcast season.

8. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 1 which further comprises

selecting advertising opportunities falling within specified time ranges within a day and/or date ranges within the broadcast season.

9. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 1 wherein the broadcasts are of live or prerecorded sports events, the series are the broadcasts of the games of particular teams, and the groups are the broadcasts of the games of teams that are members of the same league.

10. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 9 which further comprises

selling the advertising opportunities for pregame, play-by-play, and postgame portions of a sports event separately and at different pricing.

11. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 10 which further comprises

selling specified quantities of pregame, play-by-play, and postgame advertising opportunities.

12. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 11 which further comprises

selecting advertising opportunities falling within specified time ranges within a day and/or date ranges within the broadcast season.

13. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 1 wherein the broadcasts are of live or prerecorded radio or television broadcasts, the series are regularly scheduled series broadcasts, and the groups are formed from series having similar demographic appeal.

14. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 13 which further comprises

selling the advertising opportunities for pre broadcast, during broadcast, and trailer portions of a broadcast separately and at different pricing.

15. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 14 which further comprises

selling specified quantities of advertising opportunities of a particular type.

16. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 15 which further comprises

selecting advertising opportunities falling within specified time ranges within a day and/or date ranges within the broadcast season.

17. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 1 wherein the traffic system is designed to sell several different types of advertisements, differing in their media and nature, and wherein the coordination and insertion systems as well as the tuner software system are designed to present these multiple types of advertisements and other messages to the users.

18. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 17 wherein the broadcasts are audio broadcasts and wherein the differing types of advertisements include audio advertisements overlaid on or inserted into the audio broadcasts and also multimedia advertisements overlaid on or inserted into the audio broadcasts.

19. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 17 wherein the broadcasts are audio broadcasts and wherein the differing types of advertisements include audio advertisements and web page banner advertisements displayed during the broadcasts.

20. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 17 wherein the differing types of advertisements include multimedia advertisements overlaid on or inserted into the broadcasts and also web page banner advertisements displayed during the broadcasts.

21. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 17 wherein the broadcasts are audio broadcasts and wherein the differing types of advertisements include audio advertisements overlaid on or inserted into the audio

broadcasts, multimedia advertisements overlaid on or inserted into the audio broadcasts, and web page banner advertisements displayed during the broadcasts.

22. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 1 which further includes a signal detector that detects signals embedded within the broadcasts and passes these signals on to the coordination and insertion systems to trigger the initiation of the broadcast of an advertisement or other message.

23. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 22 which further includes a producer system that provides signals to the coordination and insertion systems to trigger the initiation of the broadcast of an advertisement as well as the initiation of the broadcast of other messages.

24. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 1 which further includes a producer system that provides signals to the coordination and insertion systems to trigger or suppress the initiation of the broadcast of an advertisement.

25. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 24 wherein the producer system includes provision for causing messages to be displayed to the users.

26. A networked computer broadcasting system in accordance with claim 24 wherein the broadcasts are sports events and the producer system includes provision for causing messages as to the score and the state of play to be displayed to the users by the tuner software systems.